

**Emails Regarding
No-Confidence in Leadership of the Board of Regents
Data Collected as of 10 a.m. 12/13/2006**

The emails listed below were responses to a mass email sent to UI staff on December 11. (See below).

The messages were collected in Mary Greer's mailbox, and before being placed here, scrubbed of identification information.

These comments came from all staff members, so there is no way to tell if they are from the 5200 we officially represent or not. They however, represent a voice of staff on campus and are of value because of that.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mary Greer, President, 2006-07 UI Staff Council [mailto:mary-greer@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Monday, December 11, 2006 4:36 PM
To: "UI Staff Members"@porch.its.uiowa.edu
Subject: [UnivAdm] No-confidence Vote Scheduled for December 13, 2006

Dear University of Iowa Staff Members,

On Wednesday, December 13, 2006, the UI Staff Council will embark on a historic decision: to consider a vote of no-confidence related to the leadership of the Board of Regents. The meeting begins at 2 p.m. in S401 PBB and is open to the public. All interested staff members are encouraged to attend.

The resolution to be considered and other information can be found on the Staff Council website at <http://www.uiowa.edu/~staff>. An updated list of recent news articles can be found at:
<http://www.uiowa.edu/~facsen/news.htm>

We would like to hear from you as soon as possible as we deliberate on this serious issue. You may use our web form at:

<http://survey.uiowa.edu/wsb.dll/staff/comments.htm>

Sincerely,

Mary Greer, President, 2006-07 UI Staff Council

null

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RESPONSES:

Email Message:

Mary,
Please include me in strong support of the "no confidence" vote (i.e., part of the "radical minority").

Email Message:

Mary,
I'm afraid I've become another victim of this insidious flu that's been making its way across the state. I will not be able to attend today's Staff Council meeting.

After reading the numerous comments put forth by the staff on this issue, I noticed that of the few that opposed the measure of No Confidence, a common feeling was articulated that we do not represent them. It occurred to me that these people will never really know whether or not we adequately represent them on this issue, because today's vote will be done by unsigned ballots. I would urge the Staff Council to vote on this issue by roll call, so that there can be no question as to where Staff Councilors fall on this issue. One of the main points of contention with the way the Board of Regents handled this whole presidential search process, was their use of closed meetings and secret tactics. I think it would be hypocritical to condemn their actions through the use of secret ballots.

That said, I wanted to let you know that I fully support today's resolution of No Confidence, and would vote yes, were I not confined to my home. I have relayed my thoughts on where I stand to all of my office workers, and have also included the Board of Regents as recipients of this letter, so that they will also have no doubt on where I stand on this issue.

Thank you for all of your work on the Presidential Search Committee, and for shedding light on this issue.

Email Message:

Mary,

I just wanted to thank you for all of your time and energy this past year. I fully support the resolution for the vote of "no confidence" and I truly appreciate the consideration and thought behind the proposal. You have done a terrific job of representing the UI staff.

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Email Message:

Mary

My name is Tony Zaleski. I have worked at UI since 1979. This presidential search is a farce. You can include me as a member of the radical minority. I strongly support a vote of no confidence in the board of regents. I do not believe that the search should be continued until the board of regents is replaced. They have done a great disservice to this university.

Email Message:

I support your no confidence vote!!!

Amy

Email Message:

Is there a way to vote on the resolution if one cannot attend?

Email Message:

UI Staff Council,

I am not in support of the idea of the Staff Council considering a vote of no confidence in the Board of Regents. Rather, I respectfully request that the Staff Council put forth a proposal for positive change that will help the search process move forward. In times of controversy and frustration it is always far easier to indicate what one does not like than it is to suggest a course of action that will contribute in a positive way to a solution.

The search process will start anew. Let's not get stuck in a continuing spiral of negativity. This is an opportunity to offer positive, constructive ideas about ways to make the process work well.

Email Message:

Mary, Dr. Fethke's email today was interesting. It seems we should all be happy and even excited about "what's going on at the University of Iowa". Very PC and PR. I am happy and excited about what we're doing here at U of I. But I still have no confidence that the current Board of Regents has the best interest of the UI in mind when they are making decisions. There appears to be another agenda or priority for them. We need a new board.

I vote "no confidence".

Thank you for your part in representing the staff at U of I.

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Email Message:

Many of my co-workers are still confused about what the “no-confidence” vote will mean. If you have a minute, could you briefly summarize something I can pass on to them? There has been so much information in the papers, etc that something brief would really help them decide how they feel. I’m sorry, I know you are terribly busy.

Email Message:

Doesn't seem to be such a wise decision.

Email Message:

Comment 1: I would really prefer we were discussing the forward looking resolution for the new search. It is obvious that the University community has little confidence in the regents; a resolution to that effect may be cathartic but not helpful to our goals.

Comment 2: This is really a turf fight and it is not clear to me that the regents are guilty of what the resolution accuses them of, if only because their statutory responsibilities are broadly defined and disagreeing with the University community is not automatically failing to act in the best interest of anything.

Comment 3: In my opinion, a committment to openness is the 1st prerequisite for the position and any candidate not willing to have their name be public if a finalist is by definition unworthy of the post.

Email Message:

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Email Message:

Dear Mary,

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I would like to add my voice in support of the proposed vote of no-confidence in the Board of Regents which is now under consideration by Staff Council.

I have been a staff member at UI for almost 40 years, having started as a Research Assistant I in 1967; I am now an Associate Research Scientist in Emergency Medicine, and a close colleague of Dr. Gerene Denning. I am also a former member of Staff Council and many other university-wide committees, including the advisory board for the Women in Science program.

Speaking from this background, I want to state that I am appalled and outraged at the recent fiasco with the Board of Regents and their role in the failed presidential search. I was familiar with and involved in the searches that brought us Hunter Rawlings, Mary Sue Coleman, and finally David Skorton. I blame the regents' meddling and micromanagement for driving David Skorton to leave; I am appalled at their clear lack of understanding of the nature of an academic community, and I resent their heavy-handed and paternalistic intention to simply name a president of their choice for OUR university.

Along with the many research colleagues I've spoken with, I strongly support Staff Council in their vote of no-confidence in the Board of Regents.

Email Message:

no

Email Message:

Oh Mary, of all the years to be President of Staff Council. Hang in there, girl, you have my full support.

Email Message:

Hi Mary,
Glad to see this vote is being considered.

Email Message:

Another one...

Thanks for being there - I believe this resolution should pass. The news from the Regent's this morning continues to reinforce the notion that they have no concept of the role of UI. They declined to increase admission standards, with one Regent quoted as

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saying she doesn't want UI to be a "Private University". But where is the funding necessary to be a "Public University"!

Email Message:

I support the vote of no confidence.

Email Message:

Thanks Mary and good luck. I relayed my thoughts to our excellent staff council representative, Janet Duncan.

Email Message:

Mary,

I was not able to attend yesterday's meeting but would like to submit some comments.

The problem as I see it is one of leadership style and vision. The current leadership of the BOR has exhibited a pattern of excessive secrecy, micromanagement, authoritarianism, and disrespect for the UI community and its representatives. Some examples that illustrate this can be found below.

Secrecy: Although they have found ways to stay within the open meetings laws, the BOR leadership has clearly used closed-door meetings to marginalize the wider university community and the public from the decision-making process. The people of Iowa are used to and deserve openness in the dealings of the university and the BOR.

Micromanagement: Personal and political attitudes and behaviors by the BOR leadership clearly contributed to the university's loss of an excellent president. Similarly, their unprecedented and radical changes to the presidential search process, have resulted in the loss of qualified candidates. This damages the credibility and integrity of the institution, and will likely compromise our ability to find the most qualified individuals to assume this highly important office.

Authoritarianism: There are disturbing signs that the current BOR leadership has an agenda to promote their own vision regarding the structure and function of this university. Although not directly articulated, the attitude seems to be "My way or the highway". There have also been actions and statements made that could be construed as threats of retaliation for opposing the leadership. These are characteristic of an authoritarian leadership style, something that is incompatible with the good governing of

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a public institution.

Disrespect: All of the above illustrate a lack of respect for the university community and the public. Each and every member of the university community and the Board of Regents answers to the people of Iowa. A BOR leadership that flaunts its authority to the point that it creates widespread anger and frustration can neither do its job nor represent the best interest of Iowans.

As it is unlikely that the current BOR leadership will change its leadership style, vision, or behavior, future conflict with the UI community is inevitable. This conflict will in turn harm the reputation and function of the university. Thus, to restore the public's confidence in the university's ability to serve their needs, new leadership of the BOR is immediately required.

Thanks for your excellent leadership

Email Message:

Mary,

Are we supposed to attend the faculty meeting? Faculty keep asking me if I am going to attend, but I hadn't heard that we were supposed to.

By the way, you are doing a terrific job at presenting a professional face on this. I am sending good thoughts your way.

Email Message:

My recommendation is that you cast a no vote of confidence. Our institution has suffered enough publicly and privately under the leadership of Michael Gartner. There were concerns when he was appointed. We now know why.

Email Message:

For what it's worth, I think Downer's doing a good job, considering the tight spot he's in. You can ditch the rest of them!

Email Message:

Good Work Mary, I could not get all my questions onto one survey so I did it twice. If you have to delete one that is fine with me, I think there will be enough people who concur, we have no confidence in the top Regents Leadership.

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Email Message:

Mary,

This response came to me, I am not identifying the staff member.

One thing that is bothering me is the appearance that the board is not considering the uniqueness of an academic institution. In many ways I support their efforts to make us more business-like but there should be a balance that I don't think is there. When our national reputation is tarnished like it has been, I'm beginning to think this is the appropriate step.

Email Message:

Mary,

As a merit employee, I would like to say that I am very proud of the Faculty Senate and Staff Council for their courageous stand. I have written a letter to AFSCME (my union) asking them to join in this fight to protect the integrity of the University of Iowa.

As a former county chair of the Johnson County Democrats, I believe that both my party and union need to take a stronger stand and include the Governor in their criticism. After all is said and done, these are his appointees and he needs to accept responsibility for this incredible failure.

Good luck in your vote, keep up the good work. You have represented the University and the community very well.

Email Message:

Mary,

If a no confidence vote comes up, would it be possible for all staff to vote or will the vote be limited to the Staff Council members or the staff that are able to clear their schedule during finals week to attend this meeting?

Email Message:

Mary - Has anyone told you that you are doing a great job? What a year to be the staff council president? I bet you thought this was going to be a cake-walk - get out of work to go to a few meetings....

No - just kidding - keep up the good work - Keep fighting the good fight.

Email Message:

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Keep your chin up girlie.

Email Message:

I take great offense in the Saturday Press Citizen by Teresa Wahlert that only a "few Minority Radicals" are unhappy or are raising questions about the "Search". I beg to disagree with her. I am almost 70, mother of 4, and a grandmother of 10. My 4 brothers and I graduated from Iowa, one from law school. Two nephews and one of my children graduated from Iowa. I am not some minority radical!!!! I care about the University of Iowa, and the scenario now taking place is heartbreaking!!!! None of this should have happened and I blame the Regents!!!

Email Message:

Thanks for guiding us through all this unpleasantness. From one of the "vocal minority".

Email Message:

You GO, girl!!!

Email Message:

Mary,

My thoughts are with you during these very challenging times.

Thanks,

Email Message:

I have several degrees from the University of Iowa, as well as being a University employee, and I am very concerned about the future of the University. I have a feeling that the current head of the Board of Regents wants to appoint a liquidator, not a president.

I'm regret I can't attend the meeting Wednesday. I have an appointment which I can't change.

However, I definitely feel there should be a vote of no-confidence related to the leadership of the Board of Regents.

Email Message:

Hi Mary,

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I've been following your role in this with great interest--and thinking that I'm so glad it's not me ;-))

First, I've not read other resolutions from Staff Council, and this may be the form that's used: but normally, Staff Council would be singular and the verb would be "recognizes".... Do we consistently use Staff Council as plural because of the membership, or was this a slip of the keyboard that should be changed? It looks as if it's likely the latter because of later grammatical usage.

I know that's not what you're looking for—but I figure it's good to have it as precise as possible.

In addition to using the Web form, I'm willing to go "on record": I believe that this is a good resolution and one that should be passed. I monitor a national publication called *Inside Higher Ed*, and unfortunately, the course that the Regents have followed shows us in a less-than-favorable light nationally. This could actually mitigate against some of our other concerns, e.g. hiring minority faculty and staff to join us at the University—I believe that many potential employees—and those who would represent the best and most competitive—coming from out-of-state would think seriously about joining the UI faculty or staff at this time.

I have been stunned to read the absolute lack of consideration given to the search committee representing the rest of us—and to read about the emerging intimidation tactics employed to try to keep the situation "under control."

Thank you for all of your hard work in this—for being the face of the staff who's in the line of fire!

Best wishes,

Email Message:

Mary, you have my full support.

Email Message:

Are we also going to debate how many years (decades) of no-confidence??? You go girl!

Email Message:

I saw you on TV. You did an excellent job!!! I can't make the meeting but interested in the topic hopefully they will be a review of the meeting sent out.

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Email Message:

GET 'EM Mary!!!

Hey I'd like to attend. By chance does our management HAVE to let us attend or do we have to take V-time?

Thanks

Becky

Email Message:

Excellent! I don't have any other questions, with the exception of when they all plan to step down for the good of the university.

Email Message:

Hi Mary Greer!! I'm just glad YOU'RE the president!!

Best wishes,

Email Message:

Mary,

I cannot attend due to work responsibilities, but I am very supportive of the no-confidence vote. thanks,

Email Message:

Good morning,

Given the weekend news that certain board members think this is being orchestrated by "a few radicals" and regents asking for people's salary and duties, I think it's more important than ever that staff and faculty simply say they will not work with whoever the board puts into that office. I realize it's public information, but it was clearly intended to be a request kept from the subjects' knowledge. And the fact that Gartner twice mentioned the details of Tachau's salary and teaching hours in a single, very public interview, just underscores his intent to try to embarrass and discredit her.

Email Message:

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Thank you for your strong leadership during this unbelievable mess. You have really been the voice of logic and conviction—the quotes I just read in today’s PC (I trust they were correct) were so refreshing.

Do you mind if I weigh in? It seems to me that even faculty, staff, regents, etc. on the “right” side of this issue are now looking to just getting someone in the president’s house and moving on. I’d like to argue against that mindset. We already have three (we hope) excellent candidates; it has already cost much more than necessary (including a bundle for head-hunters came up with virtually no one), and of most importance to me, at least, you don’t get do-overs just because you don’t get your way and don’t understand the concept of collaborative teamwork.

If everyone agrees to start over, then the Regents will have gotten their way. Quite frankly, I don’t think they much care what anyone thinks of them, as long as they get what they wanted in the first place—both complete control and a particular candidate in the position. (Gartner has made clear he has a particular woman in mind from the get-go).

The way the candidates have been treated is beyond embarrassing—it’s appalling. I think it’s particularly terrible that the one internal candidate has been treated so badly.

Finally, the conflict-of-interest issue needs to be brought up again, front-and-center. Vilsack should recall from his law school days that the ABA Code of Ethics says that the appearance of impropriety is tantamount to impropriety.

Email Message:

How do we go about voicing our displeasure to Gov. Vilsak/ Gov. elect Culver? Is there anything like a staff petition going around?

Email Message:

I was contacted by Gerene Denning and she apparently thought you would appreciate the views of a long term university of Iowa Professional staff member. I have been a researcher at the University (and/or VA) for almost 25 years.

First, to be very clear, I support any amendment or vote that says...”I have no confidence in the Board of Regents” to conduct a fair and impartial Presidential Search. I was upset and disappointed when that vote was delayed, by several groups on campus.

It became clear to me, after a few very personal conversations with then president Skorton and what has been said by members of the presidential search committee, that this board and M. Gartner in particular, has an agenda that puts into conflict the best interests of the University of Iowa with “other” interests (Welmark, for instance). Until

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Mr. Gartner either relieves himself from the board of regents or from his “other” interest, I cannot support his decisions or that of the board
